

The Advanced Practice Nurse's Role In Managing Interactions With Drug-Seeking Patients

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Introduction

An advanced practice nurse (APN) is an expert who plays a vital role in the provision of primary health care. The APN works in various healthcare facilities, including clinics, institutions, and hospitals, as well as nursing care amenities. However, patients may have a particular code of drug use behaviors that eventually lead to drug addiction. The patients can seek medication to alleviate their ill health status. Advanced practice nurses are capable of mingling with patients to advise them on the appropriate use of drugs. Advanced practice nurses play significant roles in managing interactions with drug-seeking patients in the healthcare system.

Role of APNs in Managing Interactions with Drug-Seeking Patients

Advanced practice nurses make a significant effort in combating drug-seeking behavior in some patients. Firstly, drug prescription monitoring programs have a great influence on identifying patients who could otherwise be misusing the drugs given to them. The nurses' role in prescribing the drugs is to help the patient adhere to the prescribed dose strictly. This act reduces the risk of death due to drug overdose (Blais, 2015). Besides, drugs can cause the death of people in society when the drug-seeker sells these drugs to the community. The advanced practice nurse must provide the prescription report that aids the appropriate use of drugs.

Additionally, the advanced practice nurse must ask the patient to provide a medical record of previous treatments when a patient claims an incidence of reoccurring illness. The checking of medical records comes before the nurse prescribes any medication to the patient. The patient's medical record needs to have more than one indicator of the disease or pain that the patient experienced. However, when the patient re-appears again, claiming the same drugs, the nurse should order a full urine drug screening only to ensure the patient has taken the previously prescribed medication. This procedure also makes sure that the drug-seeker does not sell the drugs to society but instead uses them for his or her health benefit (Smolowitz et al., 2015). Furthermore, the advanced practice nurse should confirm that the patient follows the agreed treatment plan by taking urine screening for a drug test. Besides, the nurse must ask the patient to go for further diagnosis and

screening of the disease. For instance, the nurse needs to request the patient to have an X-ray screening in case of chest complications.

The interaction of the advanced practice nurse with the patient at their point of residence offers a good chance for the nurse to evaluate the social and vocational environment of the patient. This helps in assessing the history of the patient in the drug abuse and later prescribing the appropriate medication to the patient. It also reduces the chances of drug abuse by the patient. Moreover, it is the role of an advanced practice nurse to screen the patient to identify some mental health problems (Joel, 2017). Patients with mental challenges are at risk of misusing the drugs unknowingly. APNs can manage this problem by advising the patient to have a caregiver when taking the drugs.

However, the most intimate pointer of drug abuse in society is ignorance. Most people are unaware of the dangers of drug abuse. Some patients consider taking drugs as a means of muscle stimulation to work for long hours without getting tired. Therefore, advanced practice nurses play a role in educating society about the dangers of drug abuse. It is essential for a community to live a healthy life and have a long life span. The advanced practice nurse can ask the government of a particular country to integrate the dangers of drug abuse into education. This enables them to regulate the patients who could otherwise go to health amenities to seek medication when not ideally sick (Hamric, 2013). Besides, the nurses have the capability of giving alternative drugs, especially to the addicts of narcotic drugs.

Besides, the APNs offer friendly advice to the patients on how to stay safe without taking the drugs, thus playing a role in guiding and counseling on the appropriate drugs to be obtained by the patient. The friendly environment between the advanced practice nurse and the patients creates a mutual trust that forms a corporation with the patients. Therefore, the advanced practice nurse can advise the patients to manage their lives independently of the drugs. For instance, if the patient claims headache pain and depression, the advanced practice nurse can advise the patient to go to the field, have a bit of exercise, be fresh, and get relief from the pain. This acts as an alternative way of treating less pain instead of the use of medication (Blais, 2015). The advanced practice nurse's role in assisting the patient in decision-making facilitates the management of drug-seeking behavior. The nurses encourage and emphasize the proper adherence to the dosage prescribed to the patient. By doing this, they promote the change in patients' response to a positive view of drugs and do not sell the medications to the public in exchange for money.

Conclusion

The advanced practice nurse is a useful asset in the healthcare sector. They contribute to the overall improvement in patients' health outcomes. They offer customized and personalized assistance to the people who seek drugs from the health amenities. Therefore, they guide the patients, diagnose some diseases and make further screening to ensure better healthy lives for the patients.

References

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